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An Act To Exempt the Town of Hermon from the School Administrative Unit Consolidation Law

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the Town of Hermon is located adjacent to a major service center; and

Whereas, according to the Department of Education, the proposed school administrative unit reorganization that includes the Town of Hermon is atypical when compared to other areas of the State inasmuch as the assigned labor market index of the prospective partners differs by 13%; and

Whereas, the reorganization will likely result in an increase in the allocation of essential programs and services funds to the new regional school unit; and

Whereas, there is no assurance that these funds will provide any benefit to the students of the Town of Hermon; and

Whereas, the Town of Hermon has initiated significant efficiencies between the municipality and the local school department including facility use and technology services; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. Exemption from school regionalization requirements. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 103-A and Public Law 2007, chapter 240, Part XXXX as amended by Public Law 2007, chapter 668, the Town of Hermon is not required to join other towns to form a regional school unit with a student population exceeding 1,200.

In administering the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 103-A and for the purposes of implementing Public Law 2007, chapter 240, Part XXXX, section 36 as amended by Public Law 2007, chapter 668, the Commissioner of Education shall consider the Town of Hermon to be geographically isolated and provide to the town exemptions from and accommodations to Title 20-A, chapter 103-A similar to those provided to coastal islands.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill exempts the Town of Hermon from minimum student enrollments established in statute for regional school units. The Commissioner of Education is required to treat the town in a manner similar to the treatment of coastal islands.